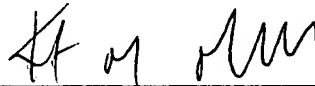


R E M A R K S

Claims 1-38, and 43-51 were pending in the application. Upon entry of this amendment, which is respectfully requested to narrow issues for appeal, claims 1-12, 18-19, 20-31, 37-38, 46-47, and 50-51 will be pending. Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendment and assert that the amendment will not necessitate a new search, does not present any new matter, and does not otherwise introduce any new issues. Applicants expressly reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of the cancelled claims in this or in a continuing application.

Applicants respectfully assert that each of the claims is patentable over the cited references (alone or in combination with other references). Applicants therefore respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn and the claims allowed. If any issues remain, or if the Examiner has any further suggestions for expediting allowance of the present application, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact Kurt M. Maschoff using the information provided below.

Respectfully submitted,



January 21, 2004

Date

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